

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly Newscast

December 13th, 2013

Lessons prepared by Justine Light & Kim Chaba-Armstrong

Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News Story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the definition that best matches each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. mourners	a) take part in an enjoyable activity to show a particular occasion is important
	2. downpour	b) gave a lot of attention and time to something
	3. celebrate	c) people who go to a funeral and are sad because someone has died
	4. applause	d) accepted someone or something happily
	5. embraced	e) giving money, food or help free to help people in need
	6. released	f) a heavy rainfall
	7. focused	g) set free, allowed to move freely
	8. charitable	h) people clapping their hands to show enjoyment or approval of something

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

anti-apartheid activist: A person who actively tried to change the racist government in South Africa, which divided the population by their race from 1960-1994.

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **True** or **False**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ There was heavy rain during the celebration of Nelson Mandela's life.
2. ____ Mandela was 85 years old when he died.
3. ____ Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years for fighting apartheid.
4. ____ President Obama spoke about how much Mandela influenced him.
5. ____ Mandela never became president of South Africa.

Discussion Questions:

Before his death, had you ever heard of Nelson Mandela? Was he famous in your home country?
How can one person change a country?

News Story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the words with similar meaning that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words from the Story	Related words
	1. get rid of	a. become less lower
	2. rising	b. stop throw away
	3. decrease	c. gradually lose disappear over time
	4. traditional	d. got rid of took away
	5. operations	e. old fashioned routine
	6. phase out	f. become more increasing
	7. eliminated	g. actions services

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

attrition: the natural gradual decrease of something over time

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences based on what you heard in the audio. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Canada Post is _____ door to door delivery because of _____ costs.	a) starting / decreasing b) ending / increasing
2. Canada Post plans to _____ door to door delivery over the next _____ years.	a) get rid of / 5 b) start / 15
3. About _____ to _____ jobs will be lost.	a) 6,000 / 8,000 b) 16,000 / 18,000
4. At present about _____ of Canadian homes still get _____ delivered to their homes.	a) one third / mail b) one half / packages only

Discussion Questions:

Do you agree with Canada Post's decision to end door-to-door delivery? What changes in society and technology may have caused these changes to be needed? Will this change affect you?

News Story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the definition that best matches each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. slick	a. difficult or awkward
	2. tricky	b. can be trusted to work
	3. best-suited	c. smooth and wet and difficult to walk on
	4. spokesperson	d. to finish or complete something
	5. reliability	e. to be the best choice for someone or something
	6. round out	f. someone who speaks for an organization, business or group

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

Begs the question: If one statement causes you to ask yourself a particular question

Traction control: a mechanical device in a car that stops the car from slipping when you apply speed in an icy situation

Anti lock brakes: A kind of brakes that stop the wheels from locking and then skidding when you brake hard.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. For which size of car has the past week been tricky the past week??
2. What is Autotrader.ca?
3. What are two safety features that improve a car's safety in winter weather?
4. What does the AMA say is the most important feature of safe driving?

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Discussion Questions: Do you drive in Canada? How do you find the driving in winter?
How safe is your car for winter driving?

Language Focus: Simple Sentences and Compound Sentences

Simple Sentences – are made up of a subject and a verb, and must have one complete thought.

Compound Sentences – have two independent clauses (two complete sentences), joined with a coordinating conjunction.

Coordinating conjunctions: and, but, so, for, or, nor, yet

We use coordinating conjunctions to join two simple sentences together to make a compound sentence. Please note, we should **not** begin a sentence with a coordinating conjunction, it must come in the middle of a sentence. Each coordinating conjunction shows a different relationship between the two simple sentences being joined. Using a compound sentence helps you to vary sentence structure and to avoid repeating yourself unnecessarily.

Let's look at some examples related to our news stories this week.

Can you see the relationships?

Simple sentences: Mandela was released from prison in 1990.

Mandela became president of South Africa in 1994.

Compound sentence: *Mandela was released from prison in 1990, **and** he became president of South Africa in 1994.*

Simple sentences: About a third of Canadian homes still get door-to-door delivery.

That service will end over the next five years.

Compound sentence: *About a third of Canadian homes still get door to door delivery, **but** that service will end over the next five years.*

Simple sentences: The post office will end door-to-door deliveries.

Everyone will collect their mail from a community mailbox.

Compound sentence: *The post office will end door-to-door deliveries, **so** everyone will collect their mail from a community mailbox.*

'and' – is used when the two sentences we are joining are equal or they occur in that order of time.

'but' – is used to join two sentences in which the second sentence shows a contrast or negative information.

'so' – is used to join two sentences when the first sentence is a cause and the second sentence is the effect.

Try to use compound sentences to write about one of the news stories this week.

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

	DECEMBER 13TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for December 13th.	0:00
Story 1	Huge numbers of mourners danced and sang under a cold South African downpour Tuesday as tens of thousands of people -- including political leaders from around the world -- gathered to celebrate the life of Nelson Mandela. Mandela died December 5th at the age of 95. Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist who was imprisoned for 27 years and went on to become president of South Africa. In a speech that received loud applause, U-S President Barack Obama asked people to follow the lessons of Mandela, who embraced his enemies when he finally walked out of prison. Mandela was released from prison in 1990 and become president of South Africa in 1994. He left office in 1999 and focused on charitable work. Obama told the crowd that Mandela made him want to be a better man and that he might not be president had it not been for Mandela.	0:11
Story 2	Canada Post is getting rid of door-to-door mail delivery. The national mail service says rising costs and a decrease in the amount of mail have made it impossible to continue its traditional operations. The post office plans to phase out home delivery within the next five years, replacing it with community mail boxes. Canada Post says about 6,000 to 8,000 positions will be eliminated over the same time period, mainly through attrition. About a third of Canadian homes still receive mail to their door.	01:41
Story 3	Driving Alberta's slick roads has been tricky this past week--for drivers in vehicles big or small. Which begs the question: is there a vehicle best suited for winter driving? If you do a quick Google search for "Top Winter Cars", you'll find a few lists. Lacey Elliott is a spokesperson for Auto Trader dot c-a, one of Canada's most well known car buying sites. She suggests something that has all wheel drive or four-wheel drive. Reliability, Traction Control and an Anti-Lock Brake system round out the list of important things to look for in a good winter vehicle. But there is one more thing. No matter what list you read, the Alberta Motor Association says any vehicle is only as good as its driver.	02:36

Appendix Answer Keys:

News Story 1 – Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
c	1. mourners	a) take part in an enjoyable activity to show a particular occasion is important
f	2. downpour	b) gave a lot of attention and time to something
a	3. celebrate	c) people who go to a funeral and are sad because someone has died
h	4. applause	d) accepted someone or something happily
d	5. embraced	e) giving money, food or help free to help people in need
g	6. released	f) a heavy rainfall
b	7. focused	g) set free, allowed to move freely
e	8. charitable	h) people clapping their hands to show enjoyment or approval of something

Listening

1. T There was heavy rain during the celebration of Nelson Mandela's life.
2. F Mandela was 85 years old when he died.
3. T Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years for fighting apartheid.
4. T President Obama spoke about how much Mandela influenced him.
5. F Mandela never became president of South Africa.

News Story 2 - Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the Story	Related words
b	1. get rid of	a. become less lower
f	2. rising	b. stop throw away
a	3. decrease	c. gradually lose disappear over time
e	4. traditional	d. got rid of took away
g	5. operations	e. old fashioned routine
c	6. phase out	f. become more increasing
d	7. eliminated	g. actions services

Listening

1. Canada Post is _____ door to door delivery because of _____ costs.	a) starting / decreasing b) <u>ending / increasing</u>
2. Canada Post plans to _____ door to door delivery over the next _____ years.	a) <u>get rid of / 5</u> b) start / 15
3. About _____ to _____ jobs will be lost.	a) <u>6,000 / 8,000</u> b) 16,000 / 18,000
4. At present about _____ of Canadian homes still get _____ delivered to their homes.	a) <u>one third / mail</u> b) one half / packages only

News Story #3

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
c	1. slick	a. difficult or awkward
a	2. tricky	b. can be trusted to work
e	3. best-suited	c. smooth and wet and difficult to walk on
f	4. spokesperson	d. to finish or complete something
b	5. reliability	e. to be the best choice for someone or something
d	6. round out	f. someone who speaks for an organization, business or group

Listening Activity: Short Answer

- For which size of car has the past week been tricky the past week??
Both big and small cars had problems.
- What is Autotrader.ca?
One of Canada's best-known car buying websites.
- What are two safety features that improve a car's safety in winter weather?
Traction control and anti lock brakes (also all or four wheel drive)
- What does the AMA say is the most important feature of safe driving?
A safe driver